

Lesson 2: Fact-Finding Task

Focus: *How do real-world examples of contested or suppressed historical narratives reveal tensions between power, representation, and knowledge?*

Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate real-world case studies that show how power and perspective influence which histories are preserved, erased, or contested.• Substantiate or challenge claims from Lesson 1 using evidence from media, academic sources, and historical debates.• Develop critical thinking and source evaluation skills by connecting practical examples to TOK concepts like evidence, power, perspective, and responsibility.
Homework Preparation Task	<p>Case Study Task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide students into small groups and assign each group a case study related to the topic. Students will add their evidence to the Kialo discussion from Lesson 1.• Each group will:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Reflect on how these cases connect to the concepts discussed in Lesson 1.○ Explore their assigned case using the provided resources and their own research.○ Prepare a short presentation (5–10 minutes) responding to the following question: "How do real-world examples of contested or suppressed historical narratives reveal tensions between power, representation, and knowledge?"• Students should include details of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ What happened in the case.○ How perspective and power dynamics influenced what was included as historical evidence in the case and what was excluded and why.○ Which TOK concept (perspective, evidence, certainty) is most relevant.○ Whether the case supports or challenges a claim from Lesson 1. <p>Case Study Options</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The “Prehistoric” Label for Indigenous Societies<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus: How defining “history” by written records excludes oral traditions and Indigenous knowledge systems.• Key Question: What counts as historical evidence, and who decides?• TOK Concepts: Evidence, Perspective, Responsibility



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested Sources: How to Do Oral History Smithsonian Institution Archives, What Do Historians Think of Oral History? Myths Highlights <p>2. Rewriting National History Textbooks (e.g., India, Japan, Turkey)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus: Government influence on shaping national identity through history curricula. Key Question: Who controls the “official” version of the past, and why? TOK Concepts: Power, Ethics, Perspective Suggested Sources: India accused of rewriting textbooks — and history, Modi's Government Changed India's History Textbooks. What Do Students Think? CNA Correspondent, EU vs Disinformation - Manipulating Memory Rewriting School History Books <p>3. Controversies over Historical Statues/Monuments (e.g., Cecil Rhodes, Columbus, Confederate leaders)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus: Debates around memory, honor, and historical accountability. Key Question: Does taking down a monument erase history — or reframe it? TOK Concepts: Responsibility, Perspective, Power Suggested Sources: The Guardian - Why every single statue should come down, Britannica – Historic Statue Removal <p>4. Museum Repatriation Debates (e.g., Benin Bronzes, Parthenon Marbles)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus: Ethical debates around who owns cultural artifacts and who gets to tell their stories. Key Question: Is the act of displaying history also an act of control? TOK Concepts: Power, Ethics, Evidence Suggested Sources: Shortform – Debate over repatriating museum artifacts, ArtReview – Why we need to change the art-repatriation debate
Activities	<p>1. Introduction (5 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recap Lesson 1: Review key arguments from the previous Kialo debate on the objectivity of history. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prompt: What claims did you find most convincing or problematic in last class's debate? Were there any arguments that felt hard to prove without real-world examples? Present the Central Question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “How do real-world examples of contested or suppressed historical narratives highlight tensions between power, evidence, and responsibility in the construction of history?” Emphasize applying evidence, perspective, power, and responsibility to evaluate how historical knowledge is shaped by access, representation, and authority. <p>2. Bridge to Lesson 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that students will now explore real-world historical controversies where power influenced which histories were legitimized, silenced, or contested.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify the shift: This is no longer just about theory — we're now examining specific policies, textbooks, museums, or public debates that determine who gets heard, trusted, or erased in the telling of the past. Reinforce the goal: Move from opinion to evidence. These case studies should show how historical knowledge is constructed, challenged, or reclaimed in specific contexts. <p>3. Presentations (30 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students present their case studies to the class. Students should take note of any useful points from other groups' presentations to use in the Kialo discussion. <p>4. Recording Findings in a Kialo Discussion (20 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students return to the Kialo discussion from Lesson 1 and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add at least one new claim or counterclaim based on their case study. Reply to at least one peer's argument, using insights from another group's case. Label their post with the relevant TOK concept (e.g., evidence – rewritten history textbooks). Focus areas for Kialo updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical Gatekeeping: Who decides which historical accounts are preserved, taught, or commemorated—and which are not? Ethical Framing of the Past: What responsibilities do historians, governments, or institutions have when retelling or revising history? Knowledge Inequality: Are all ways of knowing the past (e.g., oral traditions, archaeology, community memory) valued equally in mainstream history?
Reflection Questions	<p>Discuss the following reflection questions in open discussion or exit ticket format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did your case study affect your understanding of who gets to define and preserve history? What made certain examples feel more like suppression or distortion — versus empowerment or reclamation? In your case, who had the most control over the historical narrative — governments, institutions, or communities? Can efforts to include marginalized histories ever be truly equal when power and access to platforms remain uneven? What role should visibility, credibility, and consent play in deciding how histories are shared or retold? Should all public uses of historical knowledge (e.g., education, museums, monuments) require consultation with the communities they represent — or are there exceptions?
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson slides Kialo discussions from previous lesson
TOK Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibility: Who is responsible for ensuring that the historical narrative in your case study was accurate, inclusive, or ethical?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence: What types of evidence were used in your case study, and how did they influence whose version of history was accepted? ● Certainty: Did the case study reveal gaps, contradictions, or contested sources that made historical certainty difficult or impossible?
Critical Thinking Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confronting Biases & Assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying Historical Authority Bias: Students examine how assumptions like “textbooks and museums always tell the truth” shape perceptions of what is considered official history. ○ Questioning Justifications: Students analyze how the justification for historical interpretations (e.g., national pride, educational policy) may reflect selective memory or ideological agendas. ○ Recognizing Cultural Bias: Students reflect on how dominant cultural or political narratives influence what is viewed as “legitimate” history and what is dismissed or erased. ● Exploring Contexts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Power and Historical Representation: Students explore how governments, institutions, or historians influence which historical narratives are elevated, revised, or suppressed. ○ Evaluating Source Credibility: Students assess the reliability of competing accounts—e.g., official narratives vs. community memory or oral histories—to determine whose version of history is most trustworthy. ○ Global Perspectives: Students investigate how different countries and cultures interpret the same historical events differently, shaped by colonial legacies, national identity, or access to evidence. ● Responsiveness and Flexibility of Thought <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Refining Positions: Students are encouraged to revise their interpretations of historical events after engaging with new sources or marginalized perspectives. ○ Weighing Conflicting Perspectives: Students critically evaluate multiple viewpoints within a case study (e.g., a museum vs. a repatriation claim) to understand the complexity of historical truth. ○ Recognizing Consequences: Students reflect on the real-world impact of historical narratives—who is empowered, who is silenced, and how public memory is shaped. ● Extrapolation & Reapplication of Principles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applying Ethical Reasoning: Students use ethical frameworks (e.g., justice, equity, historical accountability) to assess whether historical narratives were responsibly handled. ○ Connecting to Modern Issues: Students link the lesson to broader debates—such as monument removal, textbook censorship, or historical denialism in politics. ○ Building Historical Literacy: Students analyze how platform, authority, and access shape which historical voices are amplified or tokenized in public discourse.